keeping in Touch
UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES
July/August 1995

General Conference to Hear Details of Gay Gene

COVER STORY

Noted journalist Chandler Burr will describe the search for a way to alter "the gay gene" at General Conference in Atlanta.

Burr is a journalist who specializes in reporting on the research being conducted in neurobiology laboratories. He will describe experiments underway on the subject of the gene, and methods to surgically alter it. Burr, is author of the forthcoming book, *The Gay Gene*, and has previously published *Homosexuality and Biology*, the cover story in the March, 1993 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*.

Burr has been following the scientific studies which led to the revealing account and the more recent efforts to devise a means of genetic alteration that would allow prospective parents to prenatally change the sexual orientation of their children.

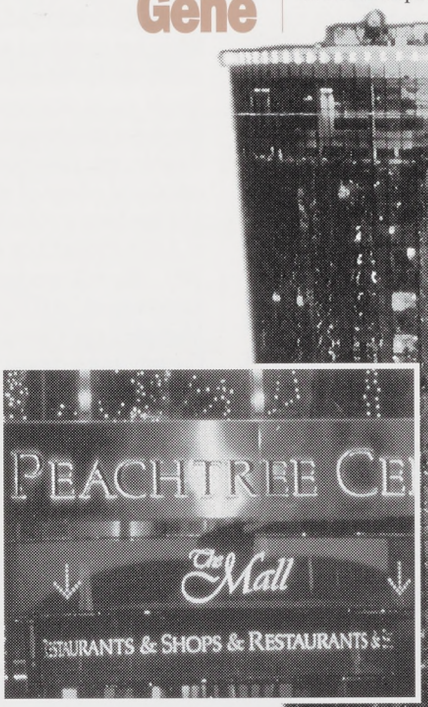
Asked why the denomination would invite a speaker who has researched the scientific evidence that homosexuality is biologically inherited, but also the efforts underway to alter the genetic code, UFMCC Moderator Reverend Elder Troy Perry said, "Who is more important than Christian gay males, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders to hear about this first? As Christians we want to know the truth and we want to be the first to say, 'Hands Off' to the bigots. We know that from the beginning, God gave us the gift of sexual orientation – God made us who we are. We are gay, we are Christian and we are proud. We will oppose genetic engineering intended to alter unborn babies in the image of small-minded, homophobic meddlers."

The book, *The Gay Gene*, will be published in the spring of 1996 by Hyperion Publishing Company, a subsidiary of Walt Disney enterprises.

Burr notes that the chapter of his book which says that sexual orientation is a basic human trait like handedness will be hated by extreme left and right both. Directing his remarks to heterosexual persons, Burr says that it is now becoming clear that homosexuals "are more different from you than has ever been thought; apparently the gay person. . . has a body different from yours and is, in fact, a biologically distinct human being."

Chandler Burr, himself a gay male, calls the chapter which describes the research that is now underway to develop the means of surgically altering the so-called gay gene "the real moral anguish" chapter and certainly the chapter that will be most politically controversial.

Burr will address the Conference on Tuesday, July 25th.



Atlanta, and the Westin Peachtree Plaza, hosts to UFMCC's General Conference Seventeen, July 23 through 30.

CONFERENCE

Diverse Group of Conference Speakers

A diverse and distinguished group of speakers will be present at General Conference Seventeen at the Atlanta Westin-Peachtree Hotel during Conference week:

Mel White, UFMCC Minister of Justice and former ghost writer for Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Billy Graham. White has since come out as a gay man to challenge his former clients to stop the violence-promoting language against gays. White fasted in jail earlier in the year after Pat Robertson had him arrested when White attempted to meet with the Christian Coalition founder at his Virginia Beach headquarters.

Reverend Dr. Paul Sherry, President of the two-million member United Church of Christ.

Chris Glaser, lecturer and author of *The Word is Out*, a devotional guide for gay, lesbian and bisexual persons.

Eric Rofes, author of *Reviving the Tribe: Regenerating Gay Men's Lives in the Face of an Ongoing Epidemic*. Rofes is former Executive Director of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center, San Francisco's Shanti Project and founder of the Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance.

Elizabeth Stuart, author of *Just Good Friends: Towards a Lesbian and Gay Theology of Relationships*, editor of *Daring to Speak Love's Name: A Lesbian and Gay Prayerbook* and a Senior Lecturer in Theology at the University of Glamorgan in Wales, United Kingdom.

Randall Bailey, Associate Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Eight Nominated for Elder

Eight individuals from around the Fellowship have been nominated for the three vacancies on the Board of Elders. Rev. Dee Dale, Chair of the Elders Nominating Committee, has announced the names of those individuals, all of whom were placed into nomination by at least three Districts.

Rev. Elder Don Eastman currently serves as Second Vice Moderator and Treasurer of UFMCC, and oversees the Strategic Growth Initiative.

Mr. Clarke Friesen just completed his thirteenth year as District Coordinator of the South Central District and has served as Chair of the UFMCC Bylaws Committee and the Corporate and Legal Division of General Council.

Rev. Brent Hawkes is the Senior Pastor of MCC Toronto, Chair of the Eastern Canadian District Clergy and Review Committee, and a member of the Elder's Task Force on Structures and Systems.

Rev. Elder Wilhelmina Hein currently serves on the Board of Elders, is a former Australian District Coordinator, and is pastoring a new congregation in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Rev. Michael Piazza is the Senior Pastor of the Cathedral of Hope MCC in Dallas, Chair of the Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee, and author of several books.

Rev. Elder Freda Smith has served as Senior Pastor of River City MCC for over 20 years, was the first woman elected to the Board of Elders, and is a well loved evangelist.

Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson is the Senior Pastor of MCC Los Angeles, First Vice Moderator of the Board of Elders, and the Chief Ecumenical Officer of UFMCC.

Rev. Delores P. Berry serves as Evangelist in Delores P. Berry Ministries. She is a gospel singer and is a well loved evangelist. Rev. Berry graciously declined her nomination and expressed her thanks to everyone for their kind support and nominations from Districts.

JULY/AUGUST 1995

Keeping in Touch is a monthly publication of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. We are a church of the lesbian and gay community, open to all. Our mission is to call people to new life through the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ, confront injustice through Christian social action, and create a community of healing and reconciliation. *Keeping in Touch* may be freely copied for distribution in UFMCC. Portions may be reprinted in UFMCC church publications, with attribution. For other distribution, please request permission. Subscriptions are free upon request. Send address changes, news and ideas to: *Keeping in Touch*, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd, #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (213) 464-5100. Deadline for each issue: 15th of previous month.

Editorial Board: Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, Moderator; Mr. Ravi Verma, Director of Administration
Rev. Kittredge Cherry, Editor

Ms. Nancy Fackrell, Typesetting,
Norm Mason, Graphic Concept

CREATIVITY

Does Bloomingdale's Know About This?

Two members of MCC San Diego, Keath Butterworth and Lonnie Lehner, have introduced a novel twist to the "wedding registry" concept. In planning for their upcoming Holy Union in August, they have asked that any gifts be in the form of a donation to the UFMCC-MCCLA Capital Campaign. Proceeds will help raise funds to purchase the new UFMCC headquarters building in West Hollywood.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Conference to Honor King

Participants in General Conference in Atlanta will pay tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the city that was his home. A thirty minute procession through the streets of Atlanta on Saturday, July 29th, will take delegates and friends to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change. The grave of Dr. King is located at the Center, surrounded by a reflective pool. A brief observance honoring Dr. King will be held as flowers are placed at the grave site. The tribute is meant to honor the slain civil rights leader's contribution to the struggle for freedom of oppressed people.

The King family has been supportive of the gay rights struggle in the past. Coretta Scott King expressed her gratitude that the UFMCC delegation will be honoring her late husband. The personal staff of Mrs. King has worked closely with Rev. Perry in arranging this special tribute to the civil rights forerunner. Following the procession and ceremony, participants will have an opportunity to visit the Center.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Grief Counselor in Atlanta

A grief counselor, Sandra Jacoby Klein, M.A., M.F.T., will be available at General Conference on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Ms. Klein has published articles on AIDS-related Multiple Loss Syndrome in professional journals. She has a private practice in Los Angeles specializing in the emotional effects of illness and loss. She has been a volunteer therapist at AIDS Project Los Angeles since 1981. She will conduct a three-hour workshop on "AIDS-Related Multiple Loss: Characteristics and Coping" twice during the conference. In addition, she will be available for counseling during scheduled hours on Friday and Saturday for individual or group grief work.

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Health Programs at Conference

HIV/AIDS programming will be one of three tracks of Health and Wholeness programs at General Conference in Atlanta. Rev. Eleanor Nealy will coordinate substance abuse and recovery programming issues. Rev. Lori Dick will supervise women's health issues and other non-HIV wellness issues. Rev. Steve Pieters will oversee

HIV/AIDS programming. There will be a number of workshops and speakers and support opportunities in each area of health concerns.

TEXAS

25 Years Marked in Dallas

Cathedral of Hope MCC celebrated their 25th Anniversary on the first weekend of July. The church celebrated with several special events, a concert with Christian singer Cynthia Clawson, and a special message by Rev. Elder Troy Perry on Saturday July 1. On Sunday, July 2, Rev. Michael Piazza presented his vision of the church in the next 25 years, entitled "Celebrating Our Future."

NEW HEADQUARTERS

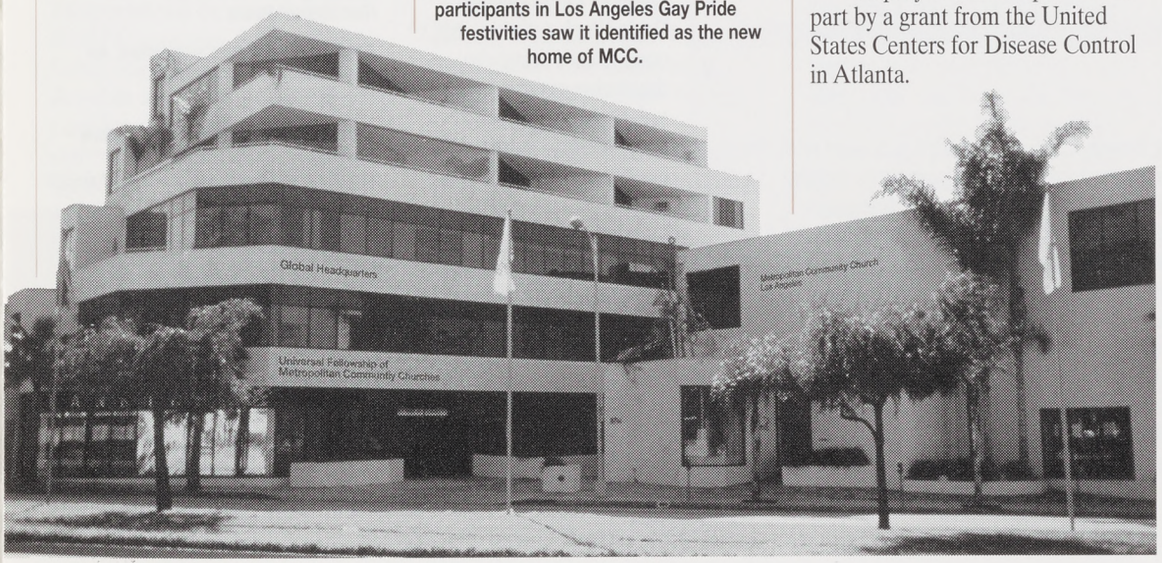
Right On The Parade Route!

As 400,000 people marched down Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood, California this Gay Pride Weekend, they saw a sign adorning the property at 8714 Santa Monica Boulevard announcing "Future Home of the UFMCC and MCCLA" Rev. Elder Troy Perry was honored this Gay Pride as one of the three founders of Christopher Street West Association, the Gay Pride Committee for the City of Los Angeles. "I was amazed at the number of people who talked to me in the reviewing stand and on the festival grounds who were thrilled to have seen the sign or had been told by others that we were purchasing the property," Rev. Perry said.

"Because the Mother Church was founded in Southern California and gave birth to the Universal Fellowship, it's with a sense of pride that the gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgendered community in Los Angeles feels ownership to our denomination," Rev. Perry reported. "I was surprised when Congresswoman Maxine Waters came up to me on the reviewing stand and reported that she had heard that we were purchasing the new headquarters and Mother Church building in the middle of West Hollywood. I have, of course, invited her to the dedication of our property."

Rev. Perry is happy to report that as of June 23, over $70,000 in cash and pledges has been received from individuals who wanted to be a part of "The 500." Rev. Perry said, "I am thrilled with the responses I have received so far. These individuals are representative of our Churches around the world." Perry also reported that a bequest from an estate of a former member of DeColores MCC has put us over the $300,000 mark on UFMCC's part of the down payment for the property. Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson reports that the sale of their property in Culver City, California has put them over the $300,000 mark also.

Rev. Perry states "I plan to visit, after General Conference, as many of our Churches as possible to share with them the particulars of the property, show a video, preach and receive an offering that will go towards our down payment and help us with our capital drive to pay the property off."


Global Headquarters
Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches
Metropolitan Community Church Los Angeles

The new Fellowship headquarters building in West Hollywood is located on the most prominent section of Santa Monica Boulevard. Over 400,000 participants in Los Angeles Gay Pride festivities saw it identified as the new home of MCC.

HIV/AIDS

PEP/MCC: In The Mail!

The Peer Education Project (PEP/MCC), a program for HIV prevention among young people, is in the final stages of assembly and packaging, and will arrive at each local Metropolitan Community Church before Conference.

The program consists of a dynamic video, plus program book and trainers guide, to give step-by-step instructions on how to establish a local program.

The creators of PEP/MCC, Alison Arngrim, Bob Schoonover, Wendy Arnold, and Rev. Steve Pieters, will be available the first four days of General Conference to answer any questions from local church individuals. There will also be a workshop at General Conference on Wednesday, July 26, for more specific instructions on how to make the program work in your local church.

This project is made possible in part by a grant from the United States Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

JUSTICE

Rev. Mel White

Around the world a new wind of cooperation is blowing. In response to the rhetoric of the radical right, the interfaith community is stirring to life, uniting traditional adversaries in the cause of justice. Many of our UFMCC pastors and congregations are taking leadership in exciting and productive local coalitions to do justice together. This could be the moment for which we were created. The question is simple: Will we let the moment pass without taking the risk, without saying "Yes!" and not accepting the obligations and the opportunities of leadership being thrust upon us? For example, in the U.S., the Lambda Legal Defense Fund, the co-councils representing us in the Hawaiian Supreme Court deliberations (deciding whether we, too, will be given the legal rights and responsibilities of marriage), has asked that each UFMCC congregation sign on to the resolution reprinted below. They want to use the names of our individual congregations to show leadership in this important cause. It requires each church to discuss the resolution, and to ask its congregation to approve it. If all our congregations sign on, it will set an example for our entire movement.

Fax me the good news on your letterhead when your congregation has signed on (214/875-4858). Get your name on Lambda's list. We need your signature before General Conference opening day. Let's help the UFMCC make history (and the front page) together.

THE MARRIAGE RESOLUTION: Because marriage is a fundamental right under the U.S. Constitution, and because the Constitution guarantees equal protection of the law; Resolved, the State should permit same-sex couples to marry and share fully and equally in the rights and responsibilities of marriage.

WORLD CHURCH EXTENSION

San Diego Celebrates Quarter Century

MCC San Diego celebrated their 25th Anniversary on June 4th, with Rev. Elder Troy Perry and Southwest District Coordinator Don Pederson in attendance. The Jubilee luncheon featured Rev. Elder Perry as main speaker. Also featured was Senior Pastor of MCC San Diego Rev. David Farrell, the Mayor of San Diego Susan Godin, Council Member Christine Kehoe, and Council Member Valerie Stallings.

STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE

Breaking the 200 Barrier

What changes will be required for your church to double beyond its present size in attendance and membership? This is the question being asked by Metropolitan Community Church of Tampa which has more than doubled during the past decade and currently stands on the threshold of a new era of outreach and growth. Rev. Karen Ducham, Senior Pastor of MCC Tampa, has led the congregation past several numerical plateaus and now is confronting what church growth advocate C. Peter Wagner calls the most difficult challenge: breaking the "200 Barrier."

Empowerment of lay ministry is the key strategy for growth beyond the 200 barrier. The most significant, and most difficult, transition Rev. Ducham and her congregation are making is in the way pastoral care is provided. Instead of the Pastor being the primary provider of care, lay ministry is empowered through small care groups. Most smaller churches typically expect the Pastor to be the primary or sole provider of pastoral care to members of the congregation and community. This expectation then limits the size of the congregation to the capability and availability of professional clergy. It is one of the main reasons most churches have less than 200 people.

Today, eleven care groups at MCC Tampa play a central role in expanding the ministry of care and outreach. Not only do these groups provide pastoral care, they provide members with opportunities for fellowship and friendship. But most importantly, they offer new people multiple points of entry to the church in addition to the Sunday worship services. Pastor Ducham says that many of the new people coming into the congregation are doing so through the care groups.

Management expert Peter Drucker, in his 1992 book, *Managing For The Future*, refers to this emerging model of ministry as pastoral churches: "There is no laity in this church; only pastors, a few paid, most unpaid." He says that fifteen years ago there were few such churches, but now there are more than 20,000 rapidly growing congregations where all members are responsible for ministry. Not all ministry in such a church is concentrated on pastoral care in small groups, but intentional emphasis is given to assure that all members are participants in ministry.

This is the second of a series of three articles on the focus of the Elders' Strategic Growth Initiative led by Rev. Elder Don Eastman, Second Vice Moderator of the UFMCC.

Next:
Beyond 400: MCC and Megachurches

Another key factor in the growth of MCC Tampa is the priority placed upon outreach. This begins with learning about the needs of people the church wishes to reach. Rev. Ducham says, "We're not scared of feedback and we're getting feedback, then we listen to what they need." At Tampa's Gay/Lesbian Pride Week activities, MCC conducted a survey to determine needs of people not attending church. More than six hundred people participated in the survey, and the information has been a vital part of the church's ministry planning. As a result of focus on outreach, MCC Tampa has had a dramatic increase in the number of younger congregants in their 20's and 30's.

Recently MCC Tampa moved into a new church home which will double the worship space to a capacity of 400, and offers off-street parking for 350 cars. This congregation is participating in the Strategic Growth Initiative to facilitate ministry planning which once again will enable this vibrant congregation to double within a decade.

HELPING YOUR CHURCH GROW! Workshops At General Conference

Breaking The 200 Barrier
Rev. Michael Piazza

The Christmas Eve Celebration: An Opportunity For Outreach
Rev. Grant Lynn Ford

Church Growth Through Celebrative Worship
Rev. Michael Piazza, Mr. David McCollough

AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

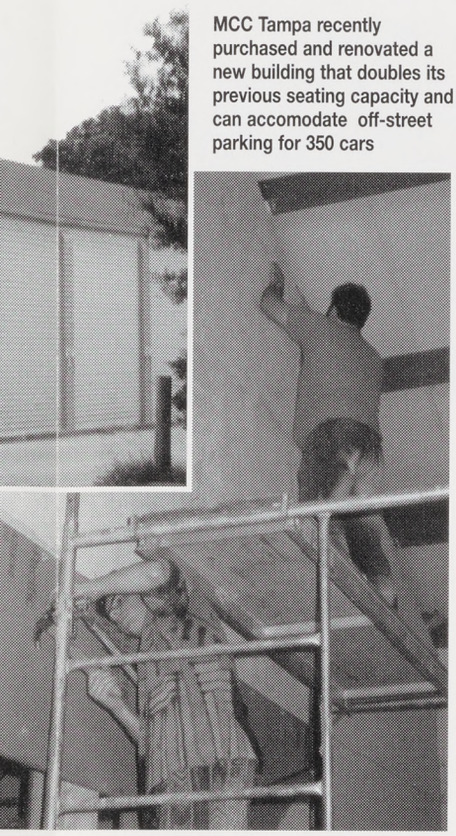
Praises

Rev. Dusty Pruit, Pastor of **MCC Long Beach**, California, settled a lawsuit with the military, which finally entitled her to an earned promotion. Upon receiving the promotion, she immediately resigned her commission at a public Memorial Day ceremony. ■ **MCC Sydney**, Australia, is celebrating 20th anniversary, July 9. ■ **Rev. Frankye White**, **St. Luke's MCC**, Jacksonville, Florida has just graduated from a three-year internship in Pastoral Counseling at Samaritan Center. ■ **Kelly Byrnes**, Pastoral Leader of **MCC Bridgerland**, Logan, Utah, was elected to the Board of Directors of the Logan Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). ■ **Rev. Frodo Okulam**, Coordinator of **SisterSpirit Special Ministry** of the Northwest District, received a Master of Arts in Theology from Mt. Angel Seminary on May 14, 1995.

AROUND THE FELLOWSHIP

Prayers

Prayers are requested for **Rev. Ed Helms**, whose mother Helen passed away in May. Her funeral was conducted in South Carolina. ■ Rev. Don Magill, gravely ill at home in Tacoma, Washington. ■ Mr. Tom Revely, gravely ill at home in Houston Texas. ■ Mr. Ken Caton, gravely ill in a transitional care center in Minneapolis.



MCC Tampa recently purchased and renovated a new building that doubles its previous seating capacity and can accomodate off-street parking for 350 cars

The Organic Church: Growing Through Small/Cell Groups
Rev. Frankye White

God's Guarantee: The Foundation For Financial Growth
Rev. Elder John Gill, Rev. Janet Parker

Breaking the Single-Cell Barrier
Rev. Arlene Ackerman

WORLD CHURCH EXTENSION

WCB: Longer Bridges

Chris Lopera of MCC Manila in the Philippines will be attending the World Community Builders Work Camp being held in the Dominican Republic immediately after General Conference in Atlanta. Chris expressed an interest to the Director of WCB, Rev. Steve Fund, and in cooperation with World Church Extension his flight has been made possible.

Rev. Judy Dahl, Administrator of World Church Extension pointed out the significance of this development. "This marks an important development in our understanding of building a global community. This may be the first time one of our people from one WCE area is going to do ministry in another WCE area! This is what it means to share..."

WORLD CHURCH EXTENSION

Children Benefit from WCE Event

The Southwest District Committee on Laity produced "Sing For The Children" as a fundraising event for World Church Extension. Musical talent from around Southern California performed at Good Samaritan MCC in Whittier on Saturday evening, June 10th. Rev. Gina Chapman is Pastor of the Whittier church.

Talent who participated included Bruce Bull from Good Samaritan MCC, Whittier; Terry Cotter from MCC in the Valley, North Hollywood; Rev. Steve Moore and the choir from Ocean of Life MCC in Costa Mesa; Cathy Spiess from ICM Los Angeles, MCCLA's Latin Ministry; and Marsha Stevens from MCC Los Angeles. The event was coordinated by Matt Jones from Ocean of Life MCC, Costa Mesa.

An offering collected over $500. Proceeds from the event were specifically designated to benefit the children of the San Salvador School in the Dominican Republic.

Rev. Judy Dahl, Administrator of World Church Extension, characterized the event as "Just wonderful! Great fun, great entertainment! All these talented people lifting their voices in song to benefit the children!"

In addition to the musical fare offered, Matt Jones and Kathy Sawyer sold raffle tickets for a beautiful comforter made by the women of the MCC in El Tamarindo, Dominican Republic. These women learned their quilting skills from some of our brothers from the Florida MCC churches, principally, Ray Barreras, and Gary Mitchell. The women of El Tamarindo will receive $400.00 as a result of the raffle effort.

"This is a cottage industry for our church in the Dominican Republic. Because some wonderful people have taught a skill, and others have supplied fabric, and others still have helped to market these comforters, our people in El Tamarindo have some income from their labor," explained Rev. Dahl.

World Church Extension will be displaying more details of this cooperative opportunity for churches at EXPO at General Conference. Rev. Francisco Barrera, the pastor of El Tamarindo MCC will be bringing eleven quilts to sell at Conference. Another quilt will also be raffled.

Rev. Dahl explained that WCE is encouraging cooperative participation between WCE congregations and churches in other parts of the world. "These hand made comforters are an important way for us to be warmed and close to other MCC friends. But there are other opportunities for cooperative ventures between churches. Come visit us at the EXPO!"

CONFERENCE

Pre-Conference Institute

Doing the Right Thing, Risk Prevention in the Local Church, will be presented on Saturday, July 22, free to all General Conference registrants.

DISTRICTS

District Conference Reports

The Mid Central District held its final District Conference in Des Moines, Iowa over the weekend of May 25-28. The theme was "Now we are God's people." Rev. Beverley Baptiste and Bryan Hamel joined the District from the Western Canadian District to discuss the proposed creation of a new District comprised of the territory that was formerly Western Canadian District and Mid-Central District. Excitement ran high all weekend, and participants voted overwhelmingly to pursue the process, to be culminated next May in Minneapolis with the first District Conference of the new District. At a

Top 20 Tithes

1. Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas $6,248.48
2. MCC of the Resurrection, Houston $2,987.91
3. Sunshine Cathedral MCC, Ft. Lauderdale $2,918.85
4. Church of Our Savior MCC, Boca Raton $2,555.15
5. MCC Washington, Washington $1,736.88
6. St. Luke's MCC, Jacksonville $1,475.05
7. MCC of the Rockies, Denver $1,397.49
8. Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston $1,351.08
9. MCC Toronto, Toronto $1,296.91
10. King of Peace MCC, St. Petersburg $1,276.74
11. MCC San Francisco, San Francisco $1,241.32
12. MCC Los Angeles, Los Angeles $1,201.17
13. MCC New York, New York $1,073.69
14. MCC Tampa, Tampa $1,014.77
15. Church of the Trinity MCC, Sarasota $987.60
16. Gentle Shepherd MCC, Phoenix $894.81
17. First MCC of Atlanta, Atlanta $872.88
18. MCC Richmond, Richmond $866.91
19. All God's Children MCC, Minneapolis $835.36
20 Agape' MCC, Ft. Worth $736.00

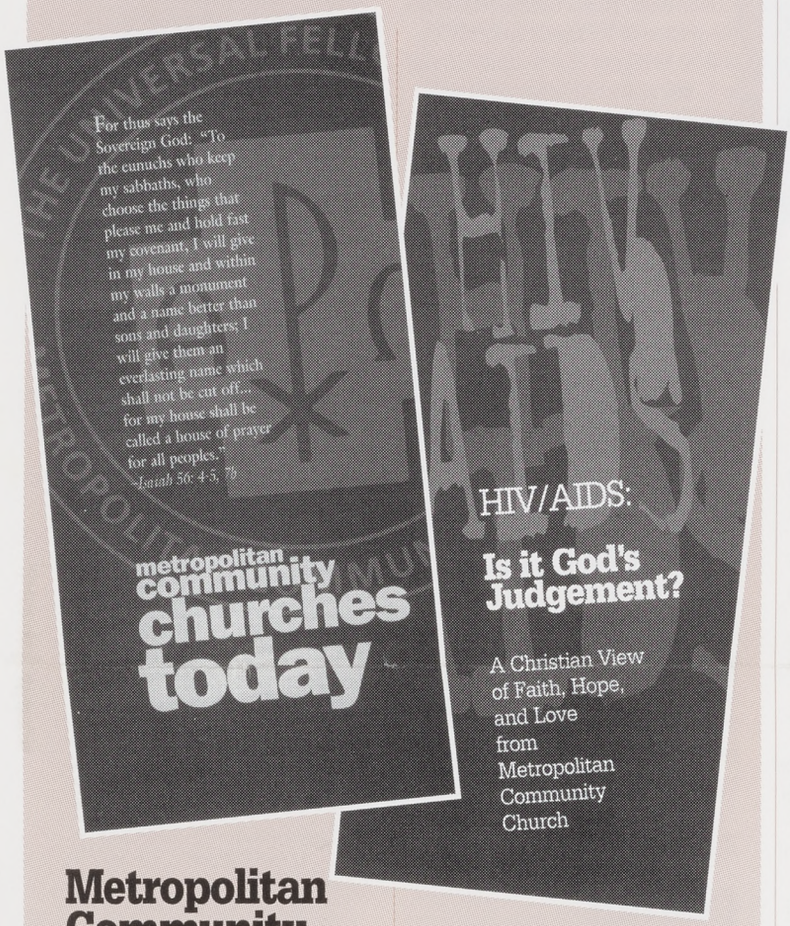
(These figures reflect the 10 percent of each local church's monthly income that is reported to Fellowship headquarters.)

Top 20 Per Capita

1. Maranatha Fellowship MCC, Houston $57.25
2. MCC of Greater Hayward, San Lorenzo $48.35
3. Church of Our Savior MCC, Boca Raton $46.04
4. MCC in Charlottesville, Charlottesville $29.43
5. Open Arms MCC, Rochester $28.18
6. New Life MCC, Charlotte $25.38
7. Faith Eternal MCC, Springfield $24.89
8. St. Luke's MCC, Jacksonville $23.64
9. Sunrise MCC of the HI Dessert, Lancaster $23.15
10. MCC Los Angeles, Los Angeles $23.01
11. Joie de Vivre MCC, Baton Rouge $22.97
12. Harvest MCC, Denton $22.94
13. MCC New Haven, New Haven $22.44
14. MCC Ocean of Life, Costa Mesa $22.41
15. MCC of the Resurrection, Houston $22.12
16. Gentle Souls MCC, Kansas City $21.52
17. MCC Augusta, Augusta $21.21
18. Christ Chapel MCC, Santa Ana $21.13
19. Redeemer MCC of Flint, Flint $20.76
20 Spirit Eagle MCC, Spring Valley $20.27

(These figures reflect the average individual weekly offerings to the local church)

Revised Brochures!


For thus says the Sovereign God: "To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off... for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."
–Isaiah 56: 4-5, 7b
metropolitan community churches today
HIV/AIDS:
Is it God's Judgement?
A Christian View of Faith, Hope, and Love from Metropolitan Community Church

Metropolitan Community Churches Today

All people–gay, lesbian,bisexual, transgendered and heterosexual- are invite to a new life through the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. This brochure has been updated. Catalog No. BR0002

.19 each

HIV/AIDS: Is It God's Judgement?

A Christian view of faith, hope, and love from Metropolitan Community Church. With 1994 revisions that reflect increasing knowledge about the pandemic, and to correct assumptions that we now know are incorrect. Catalog No. BR0006

.19 each

TO ORDER CALL or FAX

UFMCC RESOURCE CENTER 213/464-5100 FAX 213/464-2123

meeting of all people from both Districts, a new name for the the District will be selected. Participants expressed special joy at a banquet concert by Rev. Delores Berry, who also did a plenary session on the gift of diversity. Rev. Michael Piazza also did a plenary on church growth as well as a forum on the CCCC proposal that will be presented at General Conference.

The South Central District Conference was inspired and challenged by Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson at its District Conference in Tulsa in May. Rev. Wilson encouraged the District to step out in faith and pursue the next phase of the District's life.

Conference attendees enjoyed the eclectic styles of worship presented which incorporated traditions from various Christian cultures. Participants especially appreciated the incorporation of elements from the Native American Christian Tradition.

District members celebrated with those recommended for initial credentials as UFMCC clergy by the South Central District Clergy Review Committee: Reverend-Elect Susan Heiskell and Reverend-Elect Sandy O'Steen, and re-entry candidate Reverend-Elect John Haack, who was also recommended for credentialing.

The District began grieving the resignation of popular District Coordinator, Clarke Friesen. He was honored in many ways during the Conference and Banquet.

During balloting for a new District Coordinator, both candidates withdrew their name from the process. According to by-laws the Assistant District Coordinator, Reverend Ed Paul, became the District Coordinator for one year. District Conference 1996 will attempt to elect a District Coordinator for four years. The District Committee will be doing some very intense work around transition issues. Desmer Benson, Jr. was appointed to the position of Assistant District Coordinator for one year.

MCC of the Gentle Shepherd was the host-church for this year's Northwest District Conference. Rev. Farley Maxwell, Pastor of First Congreagtional Church, and his wife Mary received the first-ever Human Rights Award given by the District. They were presented the award in appreciation of their "commitment to the dignity of all people." Rev. and Mrs. Maxwell were instrumental in founding the Clark County (Washington) chapter of Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), a national organization. Elder Larry Rodriguez attended the conference. A highlight of the conference was a three-part plenary that dealt with diversity led by Rev. Claudia Vierra-Allen and Rev. Yolanda Vierra-Allen. The District Commission on the Laity was re-activated, and a steering committee was elected.

Western Canadian District Conference was held Victoria Day weekend, May 19-21 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Those who attended were from across Western Canada, as well as a few people from the Mid-Central District. One of the best attended events was the forum about the creation of the new District. Rev. Bob Arthur, District Coordinator, and Mark Williams, Clerk of the District joined with Western Canadian District members in presenting the forum. The conference affirmed the work of the District Committee that moves the District towards this new vision . The conference re-elected by acclamation the Rev. Charles Bidwell and John Chabai to the District Committee as it moves through a time of transition.

MEMORIAM

Rev. Marna Jo Montoure

The Rev. Marna Jo Montoure died June 2, 1995 at her Burlington, Washington home after an extended illness. She was pastor at Angels Among Us MCC in Mount Vernon, Washington before illness forced her to retire.

Friends of Rev. Doug Bull have celebrated his life with a panel for the AIDS Quilt.

Over two hundred people participated in the 1995 Great Lakes District Conference in Springfield, Illinois. Special guests were Rev. Elder Wilhelmina Hein and Rev. Michael Piazza, Pastor of Cathedral of Hope MCC in Dallas, Texas.

Highlights of the weekend included four worship services, eleven workshops, a country store, a Samaritan class, tours of local sites, and numerous training sessions, committee meetings and a business session. The business meeting adopted a 1996 budget, passed bylaw amendments allowing the District to move to one district conference in General Conference years, reviewed reports from various other groups/committees, and conducted elections. The business meeting concluded in record time, less than three hours.

CANADA

Pastor Narrowly Defeated in Election

By Ian Taylor

In an extremely close three-way race in Ontario,Canada, Rev. Brent Hawkes, Pastor of MCC Toronto, got 32% of the popular vote in a June 8th provincial election for a seat in Parliament. The counting of votes was described as a see-saw spectacle with early results showing Rev. Hawkes in the lead, only to lose by just a few hundred votes to a right-wing backed candidate.

In a passionate sermon after his gruelling 45-day campaign, Rev. Hawkes declared a moral victory, pointing out that an amazing number of voters had greeted him warmly and respectfully. A USA-style "hot-button issue" campaign, attacking social services and employment equity, utilized the former campaign advisor to Oliver North to turn voters away from the governing social democrats.

Although the new government has promised not to introduce legislation for further protection for lesbians and gays, new Premier Mike Harris did agree to appoint a committee of lawyers to advise him on the status of current court decisions and the likelihood of further losses in the courts by his government.

For Rev. Hawkes it was an exhausting yet exhilarating campaign in which he worked eighteen-hour days, six days a week knocking on doors and meeting electors, then preaching up to three sermons each Sunday. As he announced a period of rest and rejuvenation, Hawkes said he would be committing himself to continue to work for justice, freedom, dignity and respect, recalling the 1991 General Conference theme, "an open door."

DENMARK

AIDS Seminar in Denmark

Mr. Preben Bakbo Sloth, Lay Delegate from Marken Liljer MCC in Copenhagen, Denmark, hosted a national seminar for people with HIV and AIDS over Pentecost weekend in Copenhagen. He writes, "It was well attended and a success, and for the first time, 50% of the participants were heterosexuals. I'm also excited about the fact that there is a growing awareness and openness about our spiritual needs. Five years ago, it was something much too intimate to talk about, or it was considered simply ridiculous."

Mr. Sloth is a highly visible and active person with HIV in Denmark.

CALIFORNIA

Quilt Panel Honors Bull

A special panel made to honor Rev. L. Douglas Bull, former Assistant to the Pastor at Good Samaritan MCC in Whittier, California, was dedicated when a display of the International AIDS Memorial Quilt came to Good Samaritan MCC, courtesy of the Orange County Chapter of The NAMES Project. Rev. Bull lost his fight with AIDS in December, 1993. He is survived by his life partner Bruce Bull.

The Panel was created by the Good Sam Panelmaking Group.

AW, SHUCKS . . .

Thanks . . .

We have received many praises for the new format of *Keeping in Touch,* Thank you for your encouragement:

Thank God for the new look of *Keeping in Touch*! New format, new content, new information, new color! Its fantastic and all of us here at MCCA love it. *–Rev. F. Williams, Albuquerque, New Mexico.*

The new look of KIT is great! Thanks to all who worked on it! *–Judy Dale, Great Lakes District Coordinator.*

The new *Keeping In Touch* looks wonderful! it is classy, snappy and inviting. *–Rev. Elder D. Garner, Falls Church, Virginia.*

I received my new copy of *Keeping in Touch*, an all I can say is WOW!!! *–W. Smith, San Leandro, California*

A note of congratualtions to you for an excellent publication – *S. Phipps, San Francisco, California*

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BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

INTERIM PASTOR REQUIRED-M.C.C. ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
M.C.C. Adelaide, celebrates 21 years of continuous ministry, urgently requires a Full Time Interim Pastor for 12 to 18 months, to help us rebuild our church, and lead it into a strong committed future. World Wide applications are invited. Our representative Rod Phillips (Lay Delegate) together with the Australian District committee will be available at General Conference XVII for discussion with interested parties. An information package can be obtained from Rod Phillips or by writing via Air Mail direct to Pastoral Search Committee, GPO Box 1006, ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA. CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.

M.C.C of the Blue Ridge continues its Pastoral Search. We are located in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Roanoke, Virginia. Our church is a commissioned church and is offering a 3/5 time salary package with benefits to include individual health insurance and all conference expenses. Our new Shepherd should be a motivator as well as a teacher who will be capable of leading our church into its next phase of growth. All interested persons should send letter of interest and resume to the Pastoral Search Committee c/o M.C.C. of the Blue Ridge, P.O. Box 20495, Roanoke, VA 24018.

SERVICES

Pride, Love, and Union Services, the first and only Nationwide Wedding Coordination Service exclusively for the Lesbian and Gay Community, invites you to learn more about our services and how we can help in the planning of your wedding or commitment ceremony. Call, write, fax, or Email at any time to request specific information about how we can help you. P.L.U.S. PO Box 283, Woodstock, VT 05091 Ph. 603-448-3754, Fax 603-448-4076 Email Gaywed@AOL.COM.

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